

28 counties sue drug-makers contributing to opioid crisis

Don Behm Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

More than one-third of all Wisconsin counties sued several pharmaceutical drug-makers and physicians on Tuesday for fraudulent marketing of prescription painkillers that contributed to a nationwide public health crisis of opioid addiction and overdose deaths.

Separate lawsuits filed by 28 counties in the eastern federal district court in Wisconsin seek compensation for millions of dollars in costs of social ser-

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vices, law enforcement and emergency care in responding to the opioids epidemic in each of the counties.

The companies created a public nuisance through a deceptive marketing campaign that misrepresents the safety of long-term opioid use, according to the lawsuits.

Those counties join a growing number of more than two dozen states, cities and counties around the U.S. that already have filed lawsuits attempting to hold pharmaceutical drug-makers and distributors accountable for bad faith business practices and misrepresentation in marketing of opioids.

Milwaukee County is in the process of hiring legal experts to prepare its own lawsuits against opioid-makers and distributors.

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Senate clears way for mining

Jason Stein Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

MADISON – The State Senate cleared the way Tuesday for mining copper and gold here, passing a bill that has pitted business groups against environmentalists.

The Senate also voted to call for a balanced federal budget amendment and to tighten rules on election recounts following a massive effort to recount last year’s presidential vote that produced little change in the outcome.

The Senate passed the mining measure, 19-14, sending it to GOP Gov. Scott Walker’s desk. Walker has said he would sign it.

Sen. Rob Cowles (R-Allouez) joined all Democrats in opposing the bill; all other Republicans backed it.

Assembly Bill 499 would replace a law that essentially bars companies from extracting any material besides iron and sand because of pollution concerns.

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Daron Powers checks the deer-collision damage on a Ford F-250 pickup truck Oct. 31 at Goff’s Collision Repair Center in Waukesha. Powers said that during the peak of deer season, Goff’s repairs well over 100 vehicles damaged by deer crashes. ANGELA PETERSON/MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

Deer and drivers enter deadly week

Joe Taschler and Paul Gores Milwaukee Journal Sentinel | USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

Vehicles smashing into deer are as predictable as the sunrise in Wisconsin — and considerably more frequent, occurring an average of 56 times per day in 2016, a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel analysis of state crash data shows.

Not a single day passed without multiple vehicle-deer collisions last year, the analysis shows. Christmas Day saw the fewest crashes, 11, while Nov. 10 last year had the most, with 236 deer crashes across the state.

Wisconsin drivers are particularly at risk right now, with data showing this week is the peak for vehicles striking deer.

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USA TODAY NETWORK

Grisly scene in Texas

Survivors of Sunday’s mass shooting at a rural Texas church have recounted horrific details of gunman Devin Kelley’s rampage that left 26 people dead.

Smiles and singing were interrupted by gunshots coming from outside the building, they say. Then the shooting stopped and Kelley entered the church. Survivors recall being hit and playing dead as fellow parishioners were felled.

They say Kelley shot crying children at point-blank range, shot the church’s camera crew and targeted anyone who made noise.

David Brown described his 73-year-old mother’s ordeal: “She stayed on the ground the whole time — never saw him, just saw his boots as he walked around the church,” Brown said.

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Two women hug at a makeshift memorial for the First Baptist Church shooting victims Tuesday in Sutherland Springs, Texas. DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

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